



The role of the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry is, with the support of science and practical experience, to promote agriculture and forestry and related activities, for the benefit of society. The Academy was founded in 1811 at the initiative of Karl XIV Johan and started its work on 28 January 1813.

The Academy's 211th Commemorative Meeting

January 28, 2023

Academy President's speech

Jan Fryk2

Incoming Academy Secretary's speech

Peter Normark.....6

Principal Speech

Birgitta Svensson10



Academy President Jan Fryk

The Commemorative Meeting of the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry (KSLA), January 28, 2023

A Commemorative Meeting in the spirit of jubilees

Your Excellency

Honourable Minister

Honorary Fellows

New Fellows

Laureates

Esteemed Fellows

Distinguished Guests

Welcome to the The Royal Academy of Forestry and Agriculture's 211th Commemorative Meeting, which is hereby opened.

At last!

After two years of alternative Commemorative Meeting venues, we are finally back at the right time in the right place and with the right format. We hope that this right order of things will now be lasting.

To put it mildly the past year was tumultuous in terms of the events of February 24. Another example of something we failed to see coming even though the warning bells were ringing.

But now I do not wish to immerse myself in the devastating effects of the war in Ukraine. You all know them. We are living in a time when crises pile on top of each other and where "Permacrisis" even has become an accepted new word.

Seen from the greater perspective, unfortunately we can note a troublesome global movement with liberal democracies having decreased by 20 percent from their peak year of 2012. Today, 70 percent of the world's populations now live in dictatorships. One can only marvel at the mechanisms that constantly seem to willingly open paths for these power-hungry despots. Our 17th century Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna is said to have said:

“Do you know, my son, with how little sense the world is governed?” Sadly, to whom whoever the quote is attributed, it seems to have an eternal relevance.

But tonight is not the time to cave into the angry wills of the world. Sweden has been comparatively lucky even though the country uproar surrounding Sir Väs* topped the media in 2022. So, let's banish seriousness for a while now and devote ourselves to lighter events. As an Academy, we have reason to pay attention to several anniversaries appearing during 2023.

500 years ago, on June 6, 1523, Gustav Vasa was elected King of Sweden, two and a half years after having skied from Sälen to Mora. His job was to rule over half a million inhabitants and a country torn by war and hardship. How Swedish lives have changed since then will be touched upon by our principal speaker, Professor Birgitta Svensson. We are all looking forward to that with great interest.

Times of unrest continued right up until the peace treaty was made with Norway in 1814. This occurred five years after the formation of the government of June 6, 1809, which laid the foundation for modern Sweden with its approximately 2.5 million inhabitants.

But the years that are more connected to us here and now are partly 1811, when our predecessor The Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture was established and partly on January 28, 1813, when the Academy's first meeting was held with the crown prince, later to become King Karl XIV Johan, as director, as president that is. Thus KSLA can this year, and exactly on this today, celebrate 210 years as an active Academy.

It is of course an honor to hold the traditional office as president even if only for a short period. Simultaneously it can be stated that over time the apple has, so to speak, rolled quite a way from the royal national tree. Looking at the portraits of predecessors at the position you will see, that for a considerable period they were often portrayed as mature men, richly decorated with medals and orders. Preferably adorned with imposing moustaches. Here we might make a common contemporary attribute, even if this year's model pales in comparison. However, Honorable Meeting Participants, in the past there were no female fellows, let alone female presidents. Here the present provides an important strength factor.

The third jubilee is that on September 19 it was 50 years since His Majesty Carl XVI Gustaf took office as king and head of state for 8 million inhabitants. KSLA and other Royal Academies will pay attention to this in a special order during the year.

Many of us probably remember the accession to the throne. But how many remember that in 1973 the first environmental fees were introduced, with 10 öre (“cents”) on disposable packaging and returnable glass, or that the twin skyscrapers of the World Trade Center in New York were inaugurated? We got ourselves a lottery parliament and an oil crisis hit the world. Incidentally, I still have the rationing coupons for gas from that time.

KSLA was as active an Academy then as it is now. Among other things, a new committee was established for “Energy studies in the forestry and agricultural area”. The famous professor Georg Borgström delivered a talk at an assembly entitled “Views on the development of the world's food supply”. Topics that may feel relevant even in 2023. Something we may have more difficulty identifying with today is the “Committee for foreign

researcher contacts”, and its extensive and highly valued Swedish-Soviet academic exchange.

Where do we stand today?

As you know 10.5 million people now live in our country and the world population has recently passed 8 billion.

According to the WWF Living Planet Report of 2022, the Earth’s populations of wild vertebrates have declined by an average of 69 percent over the past half century. I do not know the reliability of these numbers, but their magnitude is still highly alarming. During the same time, the human population has increased by 116 percent. So perhaps the living vertebrate biomass is largely unchanged. In any case, the reason for the dramatic decline in wildlife should be obvious.

All these people must have food and all have a moral right to tolerable living conditions. As we know, man does not live by bread alone, but also needs fruit and vegetables. And most also require fish, meat, and dairy products.

Thus, we land right in one of our Academy’s core areas; food production. Which not least the ”Committee for sustainable Swedish food production and consumption” has worked with.

The ”Committee for Tomorrow’s Cultivation System” is devoted to more advanced cultivation systems that, at farm level, can provide both reduced climate impact, as well as protected biodiversity, increased carbon sequestration in the soil and good growth. In November, the ”Committee for Infectious animal diseases” was started with the overall goal of increasing awareness of effects on our food supply in the event of major outbreaks of infectious animal diseases.

Having this extensive knowledge base, we are happy to offer our services to the Government’s investigation ”A new food preparedness for Sweden”. It is no coincidence that we, together with among others, the Swedish Academy of Gastronomy and the Academy of Culinary Arts and Meal Sciences, run the nationwide project ”New Swedish landscape meals”. Concrete examples from the project will be uncovered later tonight. We look forward to that with some excitement. In addition we are to participate in the ”European Capital of Gastronomy” project this year ,when Stockholm takes its place as Europe’s gastronomic capital.

Much of the Academy’s work takes place within our committees. In addition to those just mentioned, there are committees for Baltic Sea issues, biological diversity and land and water usage.

In today’s troubled world, the role of the Royal Academies is perhaps more important than ever. To stand up for the basic values of free democracy, but also to spread knowledge, light, joy and faith in the future. Therefore, a special welcome to colleagues from our sister Academies.

KSLA’s aspiration is to be seen as an Academy in step with the times, and preferably with something of a lead. Sometimes however, I tend to wonder if we are moving in step with the

development of the language. Did you know, for example, that KSLA is also engaged in agrivoltaic** decarbonisation, if we are to interpret our new word list?

After all, KSLA operations should be based on knowledge taken from both science and practice. Finally, I would like to present you with a small anecdote from the past. We are now talking about the 1970s and the era of large-scale forestry practices. My boss at the time, as well as Head of Forestry in the company where I was employed, myself and an assistant colleague, visited a magnum-format clearing being prepared before replanting. Here, a range of machines are at work trenching, harrowing and piling. The set-up is reminiscent of a minor circus entourage. The on-site supervisor is the quick-thinking foreman Helmer Stillmark. Upon our arrival, the manager lightly jokingly greets him with: “Yes, and here we have Cirkus Stillmark”. Whereupon the latter immediately retorts: “Yes, and now the clowns are coming”.

There will be neither circus nor clowns here tonight. But I hope we will have a pleasant, uplifting and nutritious evening nevertheless, here in Stockholm’s City Hall, which incidentally turns 100 years old on the 23rd of June this year. Congratulations!

Once again, a warm welcome to the Royal Academy of Forestry and Agriculture’s 2023 Commemorative Meeting!

Jan Fryk

*) Sir Väs (Sir Hiss from the Disney film “Robin Hood”, 1973) is the nickname of a king cobra that escaped and was gone from the terrarium at the open air museum Skansen for a week in October.

***) Agriculture and solar energy production coexisting on the same surface.



Incoming Academy Secretary Peter Normark

The Commemorative Meeting of the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry (KSLA), January 28, 2023

KSLA – more significant than ever

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I too, would like to extend a warm welcome to all at this year's festive gathering. It is especially gratifying that we can now meet again on the Academy's special day on January 28. As for myself, this is the first time I have stood before you. We fill the entire City Hall and together we own an impressive breadth and depth of experience and knowledge in regard to our green industries. In my role as incoming Secretary of the Academy and CEO, I will be focusing fully on ensuring that you, as fellows of KSLA, have a network and organization that works in the best way possible in order to obtain feedback regarding our common ambition to promote agriculture and forestry for the benefit of our society.

Considering the challenges ahead, I see that the KSLA mission is becoming larger and more important. Such issues as security of supply, sustainability and climate along with conditions for entrepreneurship are becoming increasingly crucial. Step by step KSLA will have an increasingly important role in gathering, developing and summarizing knowledge and experience in these and other areas, in order to function as a bridge between science and business, administration and non-profit engagement. The importance of developing an arena for wise and knowledge-based dialogue concerning important issues has never been greater.

You may be wondering about my capacity in this new role of mine and so here are a few words before I get down to talking about our work during the year. For many years I've had the privilege of working as an advisor and consultant for a large number of companies, trade organizations and green industries and have supported the formation of new companies, associations and collaborations, along with participating in restructuring value chains and

management. In recent years, I've enjoyed the privilege of producing research and knowledge-based white papers in such important areas as economic growth, innovation, climate and supplies security. In my background as a researcher at the Stockholm School of Economics I presented my dissertation in 1994, held Swedish and international research programs on the food industry and on member-owned companies. Throughout my time as a consultant and advisor, I have kept in touch with universities and colleges both in Sweden and internationally. Working in the bridge between research and entrepreneurship has been in my spinal cord for decades.

Among other assignments, I would like to select my role as chairman of the Carl and Karin Larsson Family Association including the Carl Larsson House in Sundborn for some fifteen years – an assignment requiring collaboration with museums, exhibition management and not least a considerable number of members. Therefore my aim is to contribute by actively building bridges between research and business, to support the dialogue with the Academy fellows, to ensure that we work actively with the big issues for green industries, and to stand for an active and attentive leadership.

Over to KSLA's operations, what has been achieved during this past year? We work through our departments, committees and boards, and we should not forget our donated estates. Some highlights:

For yet another year, the Academy has promoted and developed working methods to adapt to a more digital meeting culture. This has increased the number of participants regardless of geographical residence, while being able to enjoy the advantages of physical meetings.

KSLA's activities for the benefit of society can be seen in the issues our Academy works upon in terms of occupying considerable space in social debate and the news. This applies to supplies security, green industry entrepreneurship, property rights, carbon storage, using without consuming and more.

The Agriculture Section

The Committee on Competence Supply in the Food Sector work has focused on the all-important labour required for strong and robust primary production and food processing. A question that became particularly urgent and important during the pandemic.

The section has worked particularly actively on questions of food supply, preparedness and future financing possibilities for Swedish agriculture.

The Forestry Section

Three very important roundtable discussions were held at KSLA concerning the cultural heritage of forests. The participants came from ministries, authorities and the cultural and forestry sectors. Response and commitment was one hundred percent. The expectation is that the continued work will lead to a preliminary study – and then to new proposals – as to how national work with the forestry's cultural heritage should be organized and financed in the future.

Biodiversity. A question discussed from different perspectives and with different input values. The Forestry Section has started a cross section committee on biodiversity measurement. The aim being to contribute a scientifically based and experience-based description of the state of biological diversity in the Swedish landscape.

The General Section

KSLA's Case Challenge 2022 focused on ideas for sustainable archipelago companies on nature's terms. The background being that although the archipelago population is a vital resource for local development, the permanent population on the islands is decreasing. During a weekend in the beginning of May, nine young adults, students and professionals, gathered on Idöborg island in the Nämdö archipelago. They worked over the weekend developing business and operational ideas for sustainable archipelago companies. After an intensive weekend three proposals for solutions for entrepreneurs in the archipelago were presented; processing food waste for companies in the archipelago and selling the resulting soil locally; office solutions and "incubators" to support people who want to develop business ideas; selling locally made soap and other cleaning products, produced from algae and raw materials from the archipelago. The case challenges are organized by the Board Committee for Youth Issues.

Climate

In 2020, the KSLA Climate Group was formed and currently it constitutes a reference group of approximately 40 fellows. There are three working groups: Agriculture and climate, Bioenergy and Farming without consuming. The group has focused on external activities to increase knowledge but also to contribute with knowledge of the land-based industries in relation to the climate issue. In addition, the group has worked with referrals, round table discussions and seminars.

The antibiotics platform

KSLA collaborates with the AxFoundation's Antibiotics Platform project, which aims to coordinate ongoing processes addressing antibiotics in animal husbandry. The goal being to provide knowledge based on current research in a coordinated manner and for this function as a platform for discussion and producing of knowledge requirements and recommendations.

The project has taken part in The Antibiotics Forum, a recurring day used for exchanging knowledge and discussion. The project has contributed to the newly published KSLA journal regarding antibiotic resistance: *The miracle that created a monster – antibiotic resistance/ AMR with a focus on animals* (KSLAT no. 5-2022).

Sweden is a leading country in terms of reducing the use of antibiotics in animal husbandry. It is important that the Swedish experience and knowledge that has been built up is brought out in the international work.

Sweden's new landscape dishes is an initiative that the president has already mentioned.

BAHP – Library, Archive and Historical Projects

During the year, KSLA has published books of specific historical interest, for example Linné's disciple Petrus Artedi's book on fish, *Ichthyologia*, translated from Latin into Swedish for the first time and *Den gröna näringen under 200 år (The green industry over 200 years)* published in two parts. Part 1 describes history and development and part 2 is about awards and memories.

Historical knowledge and historical perspective is also important to current issues. A link that became clear in the roundtable discussion “Forest, timber and building care”, concerning the restoration of culturally historic wooden buildings. For this a thorough knowledge of craftsmanship, traditional methods and access to high-quality timber is essential. Today, such material is in short supply and regrowth has been reduced due to forestry cycles combined with the necessity to protect old forests.

Yes, we have every reason to be proud of our operations. Many fellows have been involved – your efforts are invaluable. A huge and warm thank you to all of you. It is good to know that KSLA has really committed and competent co-operators. KSLA activities would not have been possible without you – you are the backbone and the lifeblood of our operations. Once again, a warm and huge thank you to you all. I look forward to us working together, both fellows and staff.

When looking into the future what do we see? Our operations are more significant than ever – we must nurture and develop our activities and work hard in our sections, committees and boards. These are some questions I particularly want to underline when I begin my job as Secretary of the Academy in three days time.

Firstly, highlight KSLA’s work with the major issues of destiny in the green industries, such as supply readiness and sustainability in order to clarify KSLA’s role.

Secondly, strengthen KSLA’s function as a bridge builder joining together research, business and administration. This to further close collaboration reaching out for more entrepreneurs taking advantages of our results.

Thirdly and finally – KSLA is heavily dependent on capital market returns. There is reason to test other forms of financing in order to ensure independence for KSLA.

I sincerely hope you all feel welcome and invited to continue your activities when working with KSLA issues. And now to tonight – I wish you a warm welcome to an inspiring meal created by Christina Möller and Carl-Jan Granqvist and with Erik Hartman acting as our guide for the evening.

Thank you all for your attention!

Peter Normark



Principal Speech, Birgitta Svensson

The Commemorative Meeting of the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry (KSLA), January 28, 2023

Life in Sweden during 500 years. Some unassuming reflections.

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Today is what we call the *Cold Day* (“kalldag” in Swedish). The day which, with its location in the middle of winter, determines how long it will be until spring. In order to find sufficient food for people and animals to last the whole winter it used to be important to determine which day this would be. If “Karl Day” (28 January is Karl’s name day in Sweden) turned out to be cold, the people would say the winter would be severe.

I would like to reflect a little over what it might have been like to live in Sweden during the past 500 years.

On June 6, 1523, Sweden became an independent state. Gustav Vasa was elected king and Sweden left the Kalmar Union with Denmark and Norway. It is difficult to assess how many people lived in the country in those days, but it could be estimated at about half a million. Pretty much everyone lived off what the soil provided.

By harsh regulations and an efficient state bureaucracy, the king’s power was enhanced at the expense of the power of nobility. Tax pressure on farmers increased, at the same time it was far more common for farmers in Sweden to own their own land than was the case in Europe. Farmers paid tax to the crown but not to the nobility and they paid in the form of a tenth of agricultural production produced by the farm in kind. When the Reformation was introduced, two-thirds of the tithe went to the state and the church had to make do with the remaining third.

Another way to set the framework for people's everyday life was that the Swedish state church became completely subordinate to the king and state administration was introduced, although it in practice it took some time before Sweden became Protestant. Gustav Vasa broke the ties with Rome, he confiscated the church's land and he appointed himself head of the church. At the church synod in Uppsala in 1593 the break with the Catholic Church was definitely made, and Lutheranism became the sole allowed church doctrine in Sweden. One example of how power was concentrated was that all book printing took place in the royal printing house in Stockholm and Royal Power had full control over the printing of reformation writings.

Everyday life in the farm household

But how was everyday life for the vast majority? There has never been only *one*, but always many aspects of Sweden. Certainly the way of living has varied a great deal according to the particular part of the country and social strata. However, it can be said that among the farmers of the 16th century the farm cottage normally consisted of a single room where everyone in the household ate and slept. Normally, the household would consist of parents, children, other relatives and even servants. They lived in a farm household as a working community. The word "Family" did not appear until the 18th century. During winter lambs, calves, goats and other small animals all lived here. The cabin would feature a large table and a hearth in the form of an open fireplace. There was no chimney and the smoke escaped through a hole in the roof. In Sweden we have always enjoyed access to fresh drinking water and on the floor just inside the door of each house would stand a water barrel and a pail for slush water. This was also used as a chamber pot.

Most people lived on turnips, cabbage and beans, and salted herring or dried meat was served as protein food depending on where in the country you lived. Porridge and gruel made from barley formed the basis of the diet, along with bread and crispbread. Olaus Magnus tells us that provided the crispbread had been baked well it could last from a child's birth to its engagement day. On baking day the women would gather on a bright spring day to bake crispbread together, and this was then hung from the rafters to be eaten throughout the year.

A financially difficult time

The Vasa kings built their state on the local organization governed by the king's bailiffs.

During the first half of the 17th century the Swedish state came to be structured by Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna's sense of order instead. He led the guardian government that came into being when King Gustav II Adolf died and his daughter Kristina was only 6 years old. Queen Kristina herself only led the government for ten years in the middle of the century, before she left the country for Rome and Catholicism.

For many, the 17th century was an economically difficult time. Farmers worked only to survive and pay their rents to their landlords. The nobility strengthened its position significantly. However, with King Charles XI's reduction the princely-feudal lifestyle that had flourished was cut short and at the turn of the seventieth century taxes were cut down to one third. By then Sweden's territory had also expanded significantly.

High age of marriage and short length of life

During the 17th century, it was common for both men and women to be between twenty-five and thirty when they married. The age of marriage was tied to the possibility of forming one's own household. A woman married when she had assembled her dowry, a craftsman when he became a master with his own workshop and a priest was usually a vicar with his own parsonage when he married. Very few children were born out of wedlock during the 17th century, probably because Lutheran morals were strongly enforced against extramarital relations. Other signs of how strictly religion was applied were the witch trials and religious persecutions that occurred. It was said to be a way to combat superstition, but it showed how the centralized state power took advantage of this to educate and control their subjects with greater severity. It was mainly the women who were accused of witchcraft and executed. Their own children were frequently forced to testify against them in the trials.

The women gave birth to many children, but mortality rate was high, not least the infant mortality rate. Many children died before the age of two and many others grew up with step or foster parents. Short length of life and high marriage age caused remarriage to be common. However, due to frequent wars during the 17th century it could be difficult for widows to find a husband. Widows had their own right to bring their case to court and manage their property, which they lost should they remarry.

Industrial society and a new elite

The economic historian Lars Magnusson shows how what he calls the marriage between an expanding Swedish state and the growth of commercial capitalism created the conditions for the emergence of the iron industry during the 17th century. Skilled Walloon blacksmiths and other specialised workers came to work in Sweden, one of whom being the Walloon Louis de Geer, who became a leading figure in Sweden's industrial life. Iron working led to a rising newly formed upper class, the "iron works squires". Most important were some 350 iron mills, although copper also played a major role in the politics of world powers. The Falu Copper Mine for instance, provided the state with considerable revenues owing to large exports. Almost half of Europe's copper consumption was provided by Sweden.

At the end of the Great Northern War in 1721 the times of great wars were over, and people could start taking an interest in social issues. Among the educated elite interest in culture and science increased. The previous class society now needed to compete with a new bourgeoisie and a rising modernity that allow us to recognize ourselves in the life of a 18th century man.

Several Royal Academies were established: The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in 1739, The Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities in 1753, and as times went The Swedish Academy in 1786. Carl von Linné was among the first fellows of The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, while Olof von Dalin became the first secretary of The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities in 1753. The most famous fellow of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music from 1771 was Carl Michael Bellman, the great entertainer of the 18th century.

Farming economy and new family formations

A boom in agriculture in the 18th century created opportunities to sell products at market. The farmer's economy improved and possessing an own farm became significant, causing

inheritances and family formations to play a greater role. Social differences widened the gap between the farmer family and servants.

From the 18th century we know much more about how people fared owing to church records and we know that there was a considerable population increase during the century. It was not the birth rate that increased but the death rate that decreased. However, there were large differences between different periods depending on harvest results and diseases. People lived so close to the bare minimum that a bad harvest could cause them to die of starvation. During the years 1710–1711, 100,000 people died in a plague epidemic, while later, in the 1770s a smallpox wave claimed many lives.

In agriculture, land sharing into parcels played the greatest role and perhaps the greatest of all was the Scottish immigrant Rutger Macklean who, on his estate Svaneholm, transformed the farmers' former 53 separate plots into four villages of 75 farms, each owning 40 acres of land and each with buildings in the middle and the grounds placed in squares around them, surrounded by fine gardens and straight roads.

This improvement created an enormous increase in productivity and during the following 25 years the population on the estate doubled from 700 to 1,400. In the old buildings that remained clustered in the villages, unpropertied crofters moved in, while the new houses of the farmers became larger and were built in a new half-timbered technique. This could be accomplished by an enlightened despot. Things were different in Dalarna, where independent farmers did not turn their own land into larger parcels but continued to divide farm holdings into smaller and smaller plots of inheritance.

A new era and new communities

Following the French example and to encourage and support the agricultural industry, in 1811 Crown Prince Karl Johan Bernadotte established the Academy of Agriculture and became its first president. At this time approximately 85 percent of the population was employed in agriculture.

Skåne took the lead in land sharing, aiming to gather the scattered holdings of different landowners into contiguous areas and in 1822 half of all the land there was shared using this system (“enskifte”). It has been said that it was governance from above that forced the farmers to accept that village communities and households were to be divided. But it was rather that the farmers themselves wanted to emphasize a social status separate from that of servants and the unpropertied.

The home was becoming increasingly important in regard to realizing the emerging bourgeois individual. This also applied to the farmers who became richer and more independent after the introduction of land sharing. They no longer wanted to live together, share sleeping quarters and dining table, with servants. Instead, they aspired to the life of the bourgeois in the cities.

Individualization in the 19th century meant that the separation between the village and the outside world was replaced by a polarization between the home and the outside world. The small family home became the ideal, and in bourgeois environments the man became the provider and the woman the housewife. Homes were modernized with iron stoves and

kerosene lamps while the housewives provided tableware and taught the children to eat with a knife and fork.

The family's social position affected family formation. Nuclear families with mother, father and children became the ideal during the 19th century, although only the bourgeoisie and wealthy farmers could realize this in a home. Farm workers and industrial workers were still often quartered in large households due to housing shortages and high rents. Many children were born out of wedlock, although this did not necessarily mean they grew up without parents. In the 1980s, we had the same family situation as in the late 19th century. Half of all children were born to unmarried parents, but who lived together. As ever, there are large differences between the different parts of the country. While farmers in Skåne were keen to distinguish their social status, social solidarity could remain very much alive in Småland villages. And in Norrland, large households continued to exist for a long time.

Although the majority of the Swedish people supported themselves by means of agriculture well into the 20th century, many came to work in the new industries established at the end of the 19th century, when Sweden underwent a late but rapid industrialization. Of course, there were also a whole range of other ways of making a living. On the coasts, people lived not only on fishing and shipping, but often worked a complex economy of agriculture and the what the sea provided.

In a country where the forest covers two-thirds of the area, forestry has always been important, not only for wood and fuel but also for grazing, collection of leaves, and berry picking. For a long time, property rights were not regulated in the Norrland forests, but in the 19th century they became regulated by the state. Later on, companies bought up forest assets from the farmers to establish large and successful sawmill companies along the Norrland coast.

Despite some years of poor growth and times of need, such as in 1867–1870 when 80,000 Swedes emigrated to the United States, average length of life in Sweden increased during the 19th century from 37 to 60 years.

A Century of Democracy

When the 20th century began, Sweden was a relatively underdeveloped country of five million inhabitants with only one fifth of the population living in cities. However, growing industries soon provided a livelihood for more and more people and not only for men – many industrial workers were women. The people had organized themselves to meet the new century and Sweden became a democracy in which all adult citizens had the opportunity to make their voice heard in general elections.

However, overcrowding and unemployment led to a falling birth rate, becoming among the lowest in the world. A series of reforms were introduced to encourage family formations and childbearing. Housing allowances and child allowances helped the new housewives to transform their homes into modern, rational living environments. Family-supportive housing policies resulted more and more children being born during the 1940s.

Still in the 1950s a good home was but a dream for many, while it simultaneously provided an important and private environment for family life during the 20th century. People listened to the radio and watched television. Association activities, the cinema and new cultural

offerings created new forms of socializing. People went to the cinema, danced at dance halls and socialized in cafés.

The family is no longer an obvious arena for socializing. Pensioners, teenagers and young people form their own communities. There is no longer a need for the family to provide security since the state intervenes if necessary. In the 1950s children's legal obligation to support their parents was abolished, and society took care of the elderly.

Much of the considerable increase in wealth during the latter part of the 20th century made it possible to invest in leisure, with long holidays compared with other international standards, large numbers of holiday homes and frequent travel abroad. In addition, people became accustomed to enjoying outdoor life in nature, which until now had been used only for survival.

Changing conditions over the previous 50 years

On September 15, 1973, King Gustav VI Adolf passed away at Helsingborg's hospital and we had a new king with the device "For Sweden – With the Times". With a new form of government, King Carl XVI Gustaf's task would be to represent Sweden, while the executive power would belong to the government. The Palme Government continued to govern after a very even election result. In the new single chamber Riksdag, a new law on parental insurance was adopted which, among other things, allows the fathers the right to 10 days off work when a child is born. Major investments were made in healthcare and social care where women were now largely employed. More than two-thirds of married women soon began to work outside the home. The expansion of daycare centres allowed women to work without men having to give up their jobs.

Industrial closures, unemployment and the energy crisis however, was soon to characterize the 1970s. Old factories metamorphised into cultural heritages. The Falu Copper Mine became a world heritage site and tourist attraction. At the same time, new homes were built on an unprecedented scale. In areas today described as troubled suburbs, many people thought of themselves as being modern when they moved from outdoor lavatories and cramped, out-of-date homes to shiny new kitchens, bathrooms and toilets.

The 1990s crisis left its mark on welfare development and society's weakest were hit hard. Our general welfare system has come into question during the 21st century.

There is, of course, a danger in attempting to draw a picture of what it might have been like to live in our country in the past. The different images are numerous. People have lived as multi-taskers, migrant workers and used various sorts of income in a number of different ways based on the many different conditions offered at different times and in different places in Sweden. Nevertheless I have attempted to reflect on what might have affected interpersonal relationships and everyday lives over the past 500 years.

During most of this time, Swedish people have lived off what the soil provided. Today, we tend to earn our living in knowledge-based companies and the service sector. A very small percentage make a living in agriculture. To be sure, products from mines and forests are still important exports, but pharmaceuticals, electronics, engineering goods and cars are just as important. Fashion, music, and furniture also contribute to the growth of Sweden's prosperity. Today we live our lives in cities, many in single households, but most children in

nuclear families. We no longer live in industrial cities, but rather in cities of knowledge and ideally near university towns. Education plays an increasingly important role for making people enjoy the good life.

Today, on the day we call Kalldagen (Cold Day), we are supposed to decide when spring will arrive. Let us hope that the winter will not be severe, and that spring will arrive with trust and consensus about our living conditions.

Birgitta Svensson